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Putting the Bible In and Taking Christianity Out.

A Critical Examination of the Dominant Ideas Concerning Religious Teaching in Public Schools.

JOHN THEODORE MUELLER, St. Louis, Mo.

The question concerning the study of the Bible in the public school becomes more acute and also more complex every day. The vexed problem seems to defy every attempt at solving it and is like the Gordian knot, which puzzled the minds of men till it was cut by the sword of Alexander. The advocates of religious teaching in the public school, after much useless deliberation, seem to be inclined to follow the method of the great conqueror by *forcing* the Bible into the public school, whether this agrees with the Constitution or not, and whether it pleases or displeases the voters. While we are not in possession of accurate and extensive statistics on this score, the reports that have reached our desk show that at least a fair beginning has been made in the attempt to embody Bible-study as a part of the curriculum of the public schools, and if the movement should gain in momentum, it may not be long before the Bible will be a regular and indispensable text-book in the public schools of our country. Weary of fruitless discussions, the friends of the Bible have quit talking and have begun to act. Such is the course of the movement as delineated in reports covering practically all the States of the Union.

An interesting feature of the movement seems to be that the advocates of religious education in the public school are serious and zealous Protestant Christians. People not connected with the Christian Church, or such as are opposed to it, have, upon the whole, remained strangely indifferent, whereas the movement has progressed most rapidly in circles in which Fundamentalism is

strongest. This fact must be carefully taken into consideration when one wishes to analyze the movement of putting the Bible into the public school. The person who takes up the matter for study must bear in mind that he is dealing with men and women of deep religious convictions, of earnest zeal on behalf of the Lord's kingdom, with such as are deeply interested in propagating the Word of God. Hence the Bible-into-the-public-school movement is essentially a *religious* and, in particular, a Protestant movement.

Now, the writer wishes to state that he is in cordial sympathy with every attempt to disseminate Bible-truths. He desires to say that he loves the Bible more than any other book, and that he regards the teaching of the Bible as one of the holiest obligations which Christians have, and that, were it possible, he would have a copy or copies of the Bible placed wherever people might be inclined to use it — in every home, every school, every hotel, every court-room, every railroad station, etc. Again, the writer believes that Scripture interprets itself, and that no intelligent, unbiased reader will be left unprofited by the perusal of the Holy Scriptures. He admits, furthermore, that a straightforward, honest reading of the Bible, with due respect for its holy contents and without any interpretation on the part of the individual teacher, will be of real benefit to those who listen to the Word. In short, the writer desires to state that he is willing to go to the uttermost to meet the advocates of the Bible-into-the-school movement and give them the benefit of every doubt, holding that the Bible, wherever it is given a chance, will accomplish that good of which it is the means and agency. Let this be clearly understood from the start.

Moreover, the writer would not oppose the introduction of Bible-study into the school curriculum because of *mechanical difficulties.* By mechanical difficulties he means such as arise from the fact that in our country different versions of the Bible are in use. Of course, these difficulties must not be minimized. Sometimes they seem to be almost insurmountable. The question as to which version should be used in certain communities will no doubt cause these communities some trouble. Supposing a community to be about equally composed of Roman Catholics and Protestants, what version should be chosen to suit both parties, considering the fact that their opinions on the value of the different versions vary so widely? Or suppose that there is a Mormon or a Christian Science element, would it not be fair to them to introduce, together with the Bible, those interpretations which they regard as essential

toward understanding the Bible, as, for instance, Mrs. Eddy's *Key to the Scriptures,* or the *Book of Mormon?* Again, take the situation as it will, no doubt, arise where Fundamentalists and Liberalists are equally represented in a community. To the Fundamentalist the shorter Bible of the modernist, which omits those passages that give expression to, and constitute, the core of Christianity, can never be satisfactory. The Fundamentalist is deeply convinced that the Bible which is to be read in the public school should be that Bible which commonly goes as *the Bible* and which sets forth the whole divine counsel of salvation. Or, considering a different situation: There are people who for good and fair reasons object to the use of the various revised versions and advocate the study of the Authorized Version. How are their divergent demands to be satisfied? In short, if the Bible is to be read in the public school, it must accommodate all pupils of all creeds; it must satisfy the various religious elements represented in that school, and as such it must be a Bible that is *not* the Bible now in common use in the Christian Church. However, let us suppose that the community would agree on the study of an acceptable version. Even then the difficulties will not all have been eliminated; for who will determine the *passages* that should be read and that are agreeable to the heterogeneous elements represented in that school? Thus we see that the mechanical difficulties in the way of the study of the Bible in the public school are great indeed. Nevertheless, even this impediment the writer would be inclined to pass up: If the question under consideration would concern only *Bible-reading,* the problem in question might, after all, be solved.

Again, in order to meet the friends of the Bible, since their motive seems to be so noble and good, the writer would not oppose the study of the Bible in the public school merely because of the *unconstitutionality* of such an act. He himself is convinced that the study of the Bible in the public school is unconstitutional, and he agrees with those who oppose Bible-reading in the public school on this ground, believing that they have the manifest purport of the Constitution in their favor. If "Congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof," then, certainly, a book so essentially religious and Christian as the Bible ought not to be made a part of the public school curriculum. Introducing into the public school the Bible, and thus a distinctively religious and Christian text-book, seems, in the writer's mind, to constitute a clear violation of the

fundamental principle upon which our democracy is based, to wit, the separation of Church and State, which would open the way to innumerable troubles and disturbances. If the Bible is studied in the public school, every Jew might for just reasons, that is, for reasons of conscience, object to the study of the New Testament, and so may the atheist, the modernist, the Turk, and everybody else who rejects the New Testament and takes issue with its teachings. Their claims "that, if any government would place the Bible into its schools as a text-book, it would teach and subsidize the religion of the Bible with funds raised by the people of different creeds, and that it would make the Christian religion the established religion of the land," are so well taken that they must stand as valid before any bar and be considered reasonable and sound by every sanely reasoning jury. However, even this difficulty the writer would consider to be secondary. By eliminating passages that offend, there remains the possibility of introducing into the public school a shortened Bible that might satisfy the various religious elements represented in it. However, that would not be *the Bible,* and it is *the Bible* which our good Christian friends who are now advocating religious instruction in the public school want to see placed into the schools supported and maintained by the people of our country.

There is a definite reason why these people insist upon having *the Bible* in the public school. Not for the sake of its literary value or even for the sake of its moral value, but for the sake of its *distinctively religious and Christian value* they demand that the Bible become a part of the State school curriculum. There was perhaps some sense, after all, in the ruling of the California court according to which the King James Version is a sectarian book. Of couse, in a proper sense the Bible is not a sectarian book. It is the book which God has given to the world, the universal appeal of the universal Creator to men living in all parts of the world. However, that California court no doubt had reasons for classifying the Authorized Version as it did. We believe that the men who wrote the decision saw more deeply than the letter of their decision would suggest. It seems obvious that they knew that not Bible-reading *per se,* but the question of religious and Christian education was the real issue of the struggle. Advocates of the Bible in the public school did not recommend the Bible as a book of universal value, but as a *distinctively Christian and religious* book. This being the case, that California court cannot be blamed

for its decision. The real issue, then, pertained to *religion* and to the religion of only a *small part of the citizens* of California, namely, of those who believe that their religious views are set forth in the Bible. Thus the issue was sectarian, and the Bible was to be put into the public school for sectarian purposes.

That not the Bible *per se,* but its religious principles, tenets, and ideals should really be placed into the school, people who head the movement are not reluctant to declare. In *Dominant Ideas* Bishop Core of London declares: "Education is the process of training the faculties, especially of the young, to enable them intelligently to live their life and correspond with their opportunities. And, plainly, if we believe in God, the most important function of education is to train the young to correspond with the purpose of God, so far as we know that. And further, if we believe in Christ as the Revealer of God and the Redeemer of men, the most important function is to train them to understand *how Christ would have them think and live. This is religious education. It should color and give character to the whole of education.*" (p. 53.)

This quotation fairly represents the opinion of a vast number of Christian people in our country and other countries who deeply feel the need of *greater religious education.* They witness with horror that infidelity is becoming ever more rampant, that vice is on the increase, and that the foundations of democracy are shattered by lack of good morals and high Christian ideals. This thought is stressed by Prof. Walter Scott Athearn in his book *A National System of Education:* "The task of religious education is to motivate conduct in terms of a religious ideal of life. The facts and experiences of life must be interfused with religious meaning. In a democracy the common facts, attitudes, and ideals given as a basis of common action must be *surcharged with religious interpretation.* Spiritual significance and God-consciousness must attach to the entire content of the secular curriculum. Unless the curriculum of the church-school can pick up the curriculum of the public school and *shoot it full of religious meaning,* the Church cannot guarantee that the conduct of the citizens of the future will be religiously motivated." (p. 30.)

What Professor Athearn here points out is a truth which has been stated again and again, even *ad nauseam,* in our church periodicals. Only we have expressed it in simpler terms and have pointed out the way in which "the facts and experiences of life

must be interfused with religious meaning." Professor Athearn advocates a well-regulated system of church-schools under the management of an interdenominational committee or board to cooperate with the public school. The proposition shows how deeply Christian people everywhere feel the want of Christian education. This is forcibly brought out in another paragraph by the same author: "The national public school system must be supplemented by a unified system of religious education which will guarantee the spiritual homogeneity of our democracy. Unless such a system of religious education can be created, there is great danger that our system of secular schools will become *naturalistic and materialistic* in theory and practise, and that the direction of social development will be determined by a secular state rather than by the spiritual forces represented by the Church." (p. 31.)

That the point maintained by Professor Athearn is well taken cannot be doubted. Of course, Professor Athearn would not ask the State to teach religion, for "the Church cannot ask the State to teach religion." (p. 30.) However, that is precisely what at least many of those who demand that the Bible be studied in the public school desire. They are convinced of the grave danger "that our system of secular schools will become naturalistic and materialistic in theory and practise." And in order to oppose the naturalizing and materializing tendencies of the non-religious State schools, they advocate not only the study of the Bible, but also the inculcation of its tenets and principles. This thought is stressed in the St. Louis *Christian Advocate* (August 2, 1922), where we read: "Religious education is coming to be regarded as a community enterprise in the sense that the religious nurture of childhood and youth is a matter of public concern. In this view religious instruction should become an integral part of all education. The Church is not alone in its awakening to the need of a more adequate program of religious education. *The public school is also becoming conscious of this need.* This institution cannot provide the program, but it can cooperate with the Church in such a way as to make the program possible. It is already doing this. In the recognition of this great common task of uniting *religion and education* the Church and the school become united as to ends, and separate, but cooperative, as to functions. Under this plan, the separation of Church and State need not result longer in the separation of religion and education."

Everywhere in this citation the language is carefully chosen, and the terms are judiciously weighed in order not to reveal too clearly the real issue, to wit, the blending of education in the public schools with the religion of the Christian churches. Nevertheless, the real issue cannot be concealed. What Christian people have in view by advocating the introduction of the Bible in the public school is manifestly more than the mere reading of the Bible or the inculcation of moral principles necessary for good citizenship. The real objective is *religious and, specifically, Christian training.* That this is in fact the issue becomes manifest wherever the question is publicly discussed between parties that oppose and such as favor the Bible in the public school. In a recent issue between a Lutheran pastor and the W. C. T. U. the following reasons were adduced by the latter why the Bible should be taught in the public school: —

1. "The Bible contains the mind of God, the state of man, *the way of salvation, the doom of sinners,* and *the happiness of believers.* It is the traveler's map, the pilgrim's staff, the pilot's compass, the soldier's sword, and *the Christian's charter.* It is health to the soul and a river of pleasure." Let the reader carefully and critically study these words. If the Bible is to be introduced into the public schools because it contains the mind of God, the way of salvation, the doom of sinners, the happiness of believers, health to the soul; if it is the traveler's map, the pilgrim's staff, and the Christian's charter, then it can serve no other purpose in the public school than to teach the Christian religion, the doctrines of sin and grace, of repentance and salvation. In other words, the Bible should be in the public school for the sake of *the Christian religion.*

2. "The fundamentals of all just laws are found in *the Word of God.* The reading of the Bible is an aid in the development of the moral nature and of good citizenship, our supreme duty to the youth of *this land of God.* There is nothing in the Constitution against our course. If there were, *there is something greater than the Constitution,* and we should *have to amend that ancient and honorable document to fit our needs.*" Let the reader note that in this paragraph the Bible is called *the Word of God,* and that our country is called *this land of God.* The writer of this paragraph evidently has no adequate conception of the principle of Separation of Church and State. This is made sufficiently clear

by the statement: "There is nothing in the Constitution against our course. If there were, there is something greater than the Constitution. We would have to amend that ancient and honorable document to fit our needs." Surely the attitude of these people not only toward religious education, but also toward the Federal Constitution is worth considering.

However, in this controversy we have noted another paragraph, which reveals the intentions of those who advocate Bible-study in the public school. We read: "The original intent of the formers was to prevent a state church, *not to prevent Christianity.* Common sense teaches us that they had no thought of *placing infidelity on an equal footing with Christianity.* The real object was not to countenance, much less to advance, Mohammedanism or Judaism or infidelity *by prostrating Christianity,* but to *exclude all rivalry among Christian sects* and to prevent any national ecclesiastical establishment. A law excluding the Bible from the public schools would conflict with that clause of the Constitution which declares that Congress shall make no law prohibiting the free exercise of religion."

These paragraphs confirm the correctness of our contention that the purpose of introducing the Bible into the public schools is none other than to teach the Christian religion in the public school. To this we object most vigorously, and this our objection we sustain for two reasons.

1. We are convinced that the teaching of the Christian religion in the public school abrogates the principle of separation of Church and State and destroys the fundamental principles of our democracy.

2. We believe that Christianity and the Christian Church will be the greater sufferer by having the Christian religion taught in the public schools.

The first point we would impress upon our *fellow-citizens,* the second upon our *fellow-Christians.*

Let us consider the first argument. If the Bible is put into the public school for the sake of inculcating Christian tenets and principles, then the Constitution of the United States of America is reduced to a scrap of paper. The truth of this requires little elucidation. If the State is to teach the religion of the Bible, then, first of all, it is necessary that the State declare itself in favor of the religion of the Bible or of the Christian religion. In

other words, the State would have to establish the Christian religion as the *favored* or *preferred religion*. However, as soon as this is done, the principle of religious freedom which lies at the foundation of our democracy, is eliminated, and the United States of America will have gone back at least four centuries, to a time when a certain religion was the favored religion of the State and was forced upon men by means of sword and fagot. The harm done would be incalculable. Strife and dissension would be sure to follow, not only between Protestants and Catholics, but also between Christian and non-Christian elements. However, even if these disturbances would not result, the injury to the *cause of democracy* would be great indeed. Even if the indifferent, irreligious elements of our country would not protest against the inculcation of Christian principles upon their children, this, nevertheless, would constitute a *violation of conscience* and an assault upon the fundamental principle of religious freedom, in consequence of which the State would *gain nothing* and Christianity *lose all*. For every attempt to force Christianity upon people who refuse to receive it willingly has invariably resulted in utter failure. Wherever the Christian religion was forced upon men, it has only increased man's hatred against Christ. The Christian religion can win only by suasion, and it was therefore a wise rule which the divine Master gave when He ordained that the religion of the Bible should be brought to man not by the State, but by the Church. Those Christians who demand that the public school should teach Christianity frustrate the very purpose which they have in view. Instead of helping the cause both of the Church and the State, they hurt both immeasurably.

In all this, however, the *Church* would be *the greater loser*. We believe that we have made clear the point that any attempt on the part of the State to Christianize our country would result only in dechristianizing it. That certainly is serious enough. However, we also contend that by putting the Bible into the public school, Christianity will have to be put out of the Christian churches and out of the hearts of the Christian children who attend the public school. This rather paradoxical statement is certainly true. That Christianity, or the religion of the Bible, cannot be taught in the public school, with its various heterogeneous elements, as it is taught in the Christian churches requires no proof. If the Bible and the religion of the Bible is taught in a school, it must first of all be so *modified* as to *suit the various parties* representing

that school. The religion taught in the public school must be modified to suit, in the first place, *non-Christian people,* and secondly, *Christian people* who are at variance with one another. After the Christianity taught in the public school has been modified to such an extent as to satisfy not only the intellectual unbeliever, the pagan modernist, the skeptic, the rationalist, and the outspoken atheist, but also the Catholic, the Lutheran, the Baptist, and the Adventist, very little of true Christianity will be left. Let us consider these points more carefully.

In the first place, the religion taught in the public school must be made to agree with the opinions of men who are *outspoken unbelievers.* This is a truth which Bishop Core of London has repeatedly pointed out in his book *Dominant Ideas concerning Religious Teaching in Provided* [Public] *Schools.* He points out that the *problem of religious teaching* in the public school cannot be separated from the *intellectual conditions* of the country. What does Bishop Core mean by this statement? As he himself explains, the meaning is that Christianity taught in the public school must coincide with the *status of intellectual culture* found in the country. Now, we are fairly well acquainted with the nature of the intellectual culture, not only of our country, but of the entire world. Intellectuals — and we would not be wrong in numbering among them Voltaire, Tom Payne, Charles Darwin, Bob Ingersoll, Professor Kent, Harry Emerson Fosdick, Mr. Steinmetz, Dr. Grant, Rabbi Hirsch — have at all times taken offense at certain tenets of the Christian religion, and they have made it clear that they have completely broken away from these tenets of traditional Christianity. Now, if the problem of religious teaching in the public school cannot be separated from the intellectual conditions in our country, then it stands to reason that the Christianity to be introduced into the public school to satisfy the demand of unbelieving intellectuals must be very markedly modified. In other words, the fundamental tenets of the Christian religion, the doctrine of the virgin birth of Christ, of the vicarious atonement, of salvation by grace through faith, of the eternal damnation of the wicked, etc., must be eliminated and set aside. In order to teach Christianity in the public schools, which at present are under the dominion of evolution and agnosticism, every distinctive teaching of Christianity must be culled out. Thus under the name of Christianity, naturalism or paganism would have to be taught in the public school; and children attending the public school

would be dechristianized and reared as enemies of the Christian Church. Nothing else can be expected. By putting into the public school an eviscerated, emasculated, Christless Christianity, which meets with the demands of modern intellectualism or unbelief, true Christianity would be put out of the hearts of the children and out of the Church of their parents. Let Christian people who urge this movement to place the Bible into the public school contemplate this.

Again, the religion of the Bible would have to be modified so as to suit the *various denominations* into which the Christian Church is divided. The necessity of this is stressed by Dr. Core in the book from which we have quoted before. He writes: "We have reached a time when the divisions in the Church, the divisions between the Church and the division of opinion inside the Church, have become nothing less than a positive scandal to the healthy and righteous conscience of mankind. The fact is they have become a positive offense to the conscience of men."

In order to remedy this evil, Dr. Core suggests the following: "I believe that there is actually nothing which is more worthy of doing than to concentrate or bring together all those who believe that only in Christ is the world's salvation . . . and diligently to free the tradition of faith from accretions and corruptions and unreasonablenesses, so that, unimpeded and unimpaired, it may speak itself out through the times of confusion and afterwards may be able to ring with a clear voice and to maintain its clear grip on the people. I am inclined to believe that as regards the religious teaching in provided [public] schools we could arrive at an understanding which would greatly improve it. The new principle would be to base the religious teaching in *provided schools upon agreement between the different bodies.* I think you would get in such interdenominational control a basis for religious teaching which, though it would not give churchmen all they desire, would give us something immensely better, on the whole, and more tolerable in principle than our present undenominationalism." (p. 61.)

Dr. Core closes his remarks with the following summary of his views: "It would in my judgment be a very great gain if they could become interdenominational and be controlled by the free judgment of an interdenominational council, which, so far as common consent would be arrived at, the real religious feeling of the district would be given the direction of the religious teaching.

On this basis I think we could hope to get in the provided schools a kind of religious instruction which, while it would inevitably fall short of what instructed churchmen want, would give us a basis on which further teaching in church and Sunday-school could be built."

The same idea is suggested by Professor Athearn, who says: "It is becoming increasingly apparent that the present emergency in our religious life demands the sympathetic cooperation of all denominational and interdenominational agencies." (*A National System of Education,* p. 31.)

Mrs. W. D. Young, W. C. T. U. Superintendent of Public Schools of Arkansas, advocates this very principle when she says: "We call upon every citizen, organization, and political party of this State to think on these things, to use all diligence to correct these great wrongs, and to act and *cooperate in a united, non-sectarian manner* to remove all barriers now existing to the reading of the Bible in our State public schools."

Did Dr. Core, Professor Athearn, and Mrs. Young visualize the difficulties in the way of such cooperation? Did they really ponder the harm that would accrue to Christianity if this measure would be carried out? If everything denominational must be removed from the Christianity to be taught in the public school, what would be left of it? On what points of doctrine would the various denominations represented by the interdenominational council agree? What else would remain but a flabby, worthless product, which is not Christianity, but a *monstrum,* with a Christian coating of meaningless words. Again, how would the teaching of such a Christianity react upon the Christian belief of the children that belong to the various Christian churches? Would it not destroy their creed? Would it not take true Christianity out of their hearts? In the end, the Christian interdenominational board would do the very thing which modern intellectualists are doing, namely, take out of Christianity that which makes it a distinct and the only true and saving religion.

Let this suffice to point out the utter impossibility of teaching the religion and principles of the Bible in the public school. Both the State and the Church would be the sufferers if the plan under consideration would be carried into effect. Let all agencies that advocate the introduction of the Bible into the public school consider carefully and not act hastily. It is a comparatively easy

thing to criticize and to point out faults of existing institutions. However, it is unspeakably difficult to devise plans which would in any way improve the present arrangement of a public school entirely free from the duty of inculcating religious principles. Let them ponder what Bishop Core says: "We are living in an age in which the critical faculty far overweighs the constructive, when we can see the faults of what exists and expose them, and see and appreciate all kinds and sides of truth very much more effectively than we can build systems which can commend themselves constructively. Undoubtedly the critical faculty is overdeveloped by comparison with the constructive." These words ought certainly to go far in urging people to leave well enough alone.

If nothing better than the present arrangement can be devised to help both State and Church, why not rest content with the wisdom of our fathers, who provided in our Constitution that Church and State should remain separate. This principle has redounded to the greatest welfare of both Church and State. While the State as such is not professedly Christian, yet the Christian Church in the United States has enjoyed greater prosperity, greater opportunities for good, and greater opportunities for testifying the truth than in any other country in the world. Let us not forget this, and let us not prove ungrateful for the great blessing which we have enjoyed.

Of course, the public school will find it necessary to teach morals. However, the morals required for good citizenship can be taught better and more safely and more acceptably from the viewpoint of conscience and experience than from the Bible. If any one refuses to accept the Bible religion, he cannot help but be prejudiced against Bible morality. The Bible teaches morality from the viewpoint of responsibility to the true God and from that of endless salvation and endless retribution. People should lead moral lives, love God and their neighbor, because God is a moral Being, and because He has loved man. The moral teaching of the Bible cannot be separate from its religious teaching. If the religious teachings are not accepted, its moral principles will not be valued. However, there is a powerful force in the appeal to conscience and to the whole concentrated experience of man. People who refuse the Bible will nevertheless see the necessity of being moral, because they are so bidden by their conscience and by considerations of reward and punishment. Of course, we do

not mean that this is religious instruction. However, we contend that the instruction in religion is not a part and duty of the State. Christian children should be taught the saving truths of the Christian religion by the Church and not by the State. The State may rear them to become moral citizens by an appeal to conscience and experience; the Church should rear them to be and remain children of God by means of the Word of God, especially by means of the Gospel of our ever-blessed Redeemer.

This is the old principle of our fathers which we would advocate anew. Let the State schools confine their moral education to the inculcation of the principles of justice, truth, and love that would abundantly satisfy all non-Christian parents who send their children to the public school, but leave Christian people free to teach their children the religion of Jesus Christ. In this way the Lutherans, the Methodists, the Adventists, the Catholics, the Mormons, and everybody else would be free to instil the tenets of their own particular creed.

In conclusion we find that there is no better plan than that of our fathers, who left it to each man and to each church to decide its issues between God and himself. That course has not harmed the Christian Church, but greatly benefited it. If under this system vice, immorality, and irreligion have increased, it was essentially not the fault of the State or of the present system, which keep State and Church separate, but the fault of the Church, which failed to do her duty in providing for her children the necessary means of extensive and complete religious training. If the Christian Church would now unload the burden of its neglect upon the State, it would cause trouble, mingle Church and State, create disturbances among Christian and non-Christian people, eviscerate the Bible, emasculate Christianity, and in the end put true Christianity out of the Church and out of the hearts of men.

Our age is critical, but not constructive, at least so far as Christian education is concerned. The plan of putting the Bible into the public school in order to inculcate the principles of Christ will prove a dismal failure because it is based upon a wrong principle and is at variance with the teachings of the Bible itself, with the instructions of Christ, with the creed of the Christian Church, and with the ultimate aim of the people who are advocating it. It is this to which we wished to call attention.

THE THEOLOGICAL OBSERVER.

Religious Schools.—On the same day two remarkable utterances were published. In display type the *Lutheran,* on April 12, published on its front page its call to Lutheran congregations to revive the defunct office of special teacher of religion for the children of a congregation. The former parish-schools, which "did much for citizenship as well as for religion," had been abandoned when the States and provinces established "common schools." "The Church was thus relieved of its obligation to furnish instruction in secular subjects. The office of teacher was allowed to disappear, though the public schools took over only Scripture-reading and opening prayer." It is to be regretted that the Church permitted itself to be thus "relieved"; by so doing it rendered a poor service to the State and inflicted harm on itself. Those churches which were "relieved" of their parish-schools have also persecuted the parish-school in other circles, denouncing them as a foreign institution and an obstacle to the amalgamation of the Lutheran forces of America. Meanwhile those churches which dropped their parish-schools have learned a lesson. "It has now become clearly evident that this discontinuance of the office of teacher in congregations because there was no longer need of parochial schools was a mistake. Instruction of the youth by the pastor in the Catechism and the assemblage of the children in Sunday-schools are insufficient. That final and vital command of Christ to teach the people 'to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you' is receiving only *partial* obedience. Christianity dares not depend on the state for imparting religious instruction. The moral and religious conditions now apparent among the young folk even in the Church prove this. They lack knowledge of God's commands." This is the most respectable and a compelling reason why every church should have its own school. But the statement by no means exhausts the reasons why there should be a parochial school, in which not only religion is taught, but the entire elementary education of a child should be provided in a religious atmosphere and the child associated from its earliest life with his coreligionists. The *Lutheran* is not ready to advocate the establishment of complete congregational schools as we have them in the Missouri Synod. "Corrective action by church councils and congregations should be promptly undertaken. Plans should now be made so that with the beginning of another school-year the churches will be open at certain convenient hours each week, during which a qualified teacher will give instruction in religion. The teacher should be engaged at once and thus enabled to prepare for work to be begun next September. Lutheran congregations will again greatly serve by taking the lead in establishing schools of religion." It is plain therefore that the advocates of the Lutheran congregational school in the circles served by the *Lutheran* have not learned all their lessons yet. They will as they proceed find that they will have to take hold of the entire education

of their children, or permit the good work which they are doing in their school of religion to be neutralized and destroyed by the non-religious common school. But the school of religion, even if taught only "at certain convenient hours each week" by a competent teacher, is at least a good beginning, on which all Lutherans will invoke the Lord's blessing. A movement like this, moreover, contains a promise that Lutherans may begin to understand and appreciate each other a little better in the future. — The *St. Louis Post-Dispatch,* on April 12, reported from Omaha, Nebr., that Rev. Dr. William E. Gardner, executive secretary of the Department of Religious Education of the Protestant Episcopal Church, said in an opening address to the annual conference of educational leaders of that denomination: "We need frankly to recognize that the Sunday-school has no future because it is doomed to grow weaker in its appeal to the rising generation. I do not mean to say that there will be less religious instruction for children in the future; on the contrary, there will be more and of a more thorough and systematic character than is possible under present Sunday-school limitations. But as an educational institution the church-school meeting is losing the confidence of leaders and parents. All kinds of families have ceased to place emphasis on children's being members of a Sunday-school. Week-day is the time for religious instruction, when the child is in a receptive mood and effective teachers can be obtained, who will not teach on Sunday, and when a discipline can be maintained, impossible on Sunday." How these thoughts will be formed into actions still remains to be seen. But the friends of the congregational school will certainly draw comfort and encouragement from them. D.

The Seventh Regular Convention of the Ev. Luth. Synod of Australia, assembled at Tweedvale, South Australia, March 2—7, was turned into a farewell meeting for the General President of the Synod, Rev. Th. Nickel. We quote from the *Australian Lutheran* for March 14: "Synod was inaugurated on Friday morning by a particularly solemn and impressive service. The preacher, our worthy General President, the Rev. Th. Nickel, for the last time as General President of the Ev. Luth. Synod in Australia, addressed a large Lutheran audience, and the hearers, cognizant of the fact, listened with rapt attention to his stirring words of farewell. Choosing as his text 1 John 2, 28: 'And now, little children, abide in Him,' etc., the able speaker exhorted both the ministry and the laity to remain true to Christ and His soul-saving Word unto the end. By way of introduction he made several references to the call he had accepted from the European field of the Lutheran Church. He felt deeply his approaching departure from this land of peace and plenty, and the fact that he was severing his connection with Synod, which body he had served as General President for a period of over twenty years, was causing him many a pang. However, he had not consulted flesh and blood in this matter and felt assured that it was the Lord who had called him into this distant and, at present, perilous field of labor. To the ministers assembled before him he made a powerful

appeal to abide in doctrine and life in the Lord and to carry on conscientiously and cheerfully the glorious work the Lord of the Church had entrusted to them. Profound silence and deep emotion attended his memorable address to the last word. . . . On Sunday evening Pastor Nickel was farewelled by the pastoral conference and presented with a roll of notes. On Wednesday morning the official farewell of Synod was celebrated. President Darsow, of Queensland, delivered the farewell address, while Mr. W. Nichterlein and ex-Teacher Hubner also spoke. Pastor Nickel feelingly responded. — A new page was written in the history of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Australia at the convention in Tweedvale. It is the first time that the honorary title of Doctor of Divinity was conferred on any one of its pastors. As a token of esteem and in recognition of the many and most valuable services rendered to Synod during his twenty years of office as General President this honorary title was conferred upon the Rev. Th. Nickel." —

The resolution to confer the title of Doctor of Divinity on President Nickel was in the form of a request to the faculty to give effect to the Synod's resolution. The Synod also established a "Free-Church-in-Europe Treasury," from which "assistance is to be speedily given to our brethren in Europe in Church and mission." D.

Birth Control. — The Republic Syndicate is publishing a copyrighted article by Kathleen Norris on this mooted subject which deserves wide dissemination. We can give only glimpses of its contents. The article does not discuss the deeper ethical questions that enter into this subject, but exhibits the unsoundness of the movement from the social and sanitary viewpoints. "To use the word 'control' for what is really deliberate license remedied by unnatural means is a stupid misuse of terms." The stock argument of the champion of birth control, the question whether the teeming families in the slums do not need birth control is met thus: "My dear woman, of course they do! They need self-control first, foremost, and all the time! [Very good; comp. 1 Pet. 3, 7.] They need money control and dirt control and health control. But what you propose to give them is less, and not more, responsibility. . . . Surely this is the very apotheosis of perversity." The appeal to the law of heredity, which expects from families with a large number of children only paupers, mental mediocres, and criminals to rise, is met by the facts of history. It is rather the few pampered children of the idle rich, supposedly thoroughbreds of the first quality, that come under the curse of heredity. "Our hospitals are full of white-faced women, struggling back to partial health, winning a few years before the inevitable and untimely end, because Nature will not be eternally flouted, because delicate flesh and blood must pay the price when great privileges are abused and great purposes balked." The author informs us that sixteen-year-old high school girls are discussing birth control and deciding for it. She warns her sisters: "Yes, you poor little blindfolded child, one feels like saying in answer: 'And ten years ago you said that when you had to stop playing with dolls,

you would kill yourself — and ten years before that you would have handed over the Kohinoor itself for a graham cracker! There are just two classes of things in the world — and in one class are all these wedding-presents of yours, and theaters, and jewels, and books, and all the other lifeless things that never change! And in the other class, all by itself, is the miracle — the miracle of life, as mysterious as, and so much more sweet than, death — the fairies come alive, and yours — your children!' Don't arm yourselves against them, one wants to say. Don't put them out of your life. Begin with lesser things! Put away vanity and selfishness, put away the silly competition that makes home-making so hard. . . . There is nothing down-town to draw you away; there is a fulness and a sweetness right here in your hands that might make the most successful professional woman in the world sick with envy! . . . She is going to be a pioneer in her generation, that young woman, perhaps a child to-day, who brings the big family again into fashion, who arouses the envy and admiration of all her world with her boys and girls! . . . 'Birth control,' in that it would make irresponsible persons even less responsible, can accomplish nothing. But when women begin to appreciate what they do when they bear children, how unimportant everything else becomes beside it, how far their present household laws and regulations are from the simple, sensible homes that they might be building about their children, how entirely sex matters are in their hands, and how completely indeed sex responsibilities fall upon them, and, above all, what infinite joys, dignities, glories, and delights they fling away when they fling away motherhood, then we shall have 'control,' indeed, in almost every detail and department — except where 'life more abundant' [?] is concerned!" (Quotations from *St. Louis Globe-Democrat,* Sunday Magazine section, p. 11.) On this subject the men, too, deserve to be addressed separately by some competent person. D.

Another Utopia. — In Smith River Valley, Patrick County, Va., Rev. Allen Stickney, with six families from Georgia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Indiana, has established a "Christian community removed from the temptations of a reckless world, where a daily religion based on the fundamental truths of the Bible can be practised." It will not take long until these enthusiasts learn that they cannot run away from this reckless world while they are living in it in bodies of flesh, and that the prince of the air flies over the lofty mountains enclosing Smith River Valley. D.

The Harm Done by the Sponsors of the Volstead Act. — Addressing nine hundred women assembled at Atlantic City, N. J., for the annual convention of the State Federation of Women's Clubs, on May 4, Governor S. Silzer asked those who had not violated the Volstead law or known it to be violated by some member of their family to arise. More than half of the audience kept their seats "with dismay on their countenances." What if the nation were asked to "'fess up" to such a question? Not the least of the results of our

late prohibition legislation is that it creates evil consciences, erring consciences, confusion in ethics. The powers that be have declared something wrong that is not wrong in itself. The powers should be obeyed because obedience in the matter in question does not deprive one of salvation. Christians do obey the Volstead Act, while they abominate it. But how about the rest? It is a pity that Christian churches have permitted themselves to sponsor and champion this legislation, which incites to greater and more multifarious law-breaking than we had without it, fosters hypocrisy, protects graft and greed, and damns men's souls by making them regard something as sin that is no sin, and its opposite, which is sin, as no sin. D.

"Mr. Page in the Abbey." — A tablet has been placed for our ambassador to England during the late war in Westminster Abbey, where England honors those who have performed distinguished services for the British Commonwealth. This is, indeed, an event that compels serious reflection. The *Chicago Tribune,* on April 14, comments on it editorially. It cites from the recommendation of the distinguished Britons who wished Mr. Page so signally honored this remark: "He was the happiest, the most liberated man in Europe when America entered the war," and says: "Any American who was capable of being 'happy' and 'liberated' when his country was about to plunge into a great European conflict, and when 75,000 American boys were about to lay down their lives, no matter what the cause, was not the man to represent American interests, either abroad or at home. . . . There were Americans at home who felt happy and liberated when we entered the World War, but very few of them were in khaki." We recall a scene in a grocery store during those days. A mother remarked, weeping, that her boys had been drafted for the army and was violently rebuked by another lady, who declared the draft and America's entrance into the war a glorious and happy event. When asked how many sons she was sacrificing for the glory and happiness of America, she remembered that she had urgent business somewhere else, — probably she was due at another place to enthuse men for "canning Bill." This lady had no children at all; she was lavishly expending the life-blood of others with a cannibal joy and happiness which in those days was regarded as the criterion of a patriot. Mr. Page has deserved well of England, no doubt. His tablet in England's hall of fame, however, raises the question whether he did not serve England better than America. "We have too many representatives who forget that they are appointed to represent the American people and not some others. We think Mr. Page was an outstanding example of this perverted partisanism, and his tablet in Westminster should be a warning to those who select our ambassadors." Unless a great change takes place in our nation, the tablet in Westminster will not act as a warning, but as an incentive and a promise. It is most likely so intended. Time was when an American representative would have been publicly pilloried for permitting himself to be thus "honored." We have lost that feeling. We are growing callous to moral reflections, though we are increasing in

patented and trade-marked American virtuousness by the Coué method. We have run up a fearful account with the righteous God, who hates lies, hypocrisy, and double-dealing. Mercy on the innocent bystanders (if there are any such), when our day of reckoning comes and our bills are presented to us! D.

Latvia. — *Semaine Relig.* of October 2, 1922, reports that the National Assembly by a two-thirds majority, made up of Jews and Freethinkers, has adopted the *Concordat* with the Roman Curia, which spells the doom of the Lutheran Church. Latvia obligates itself to maintain a Roman archbishop at Riga and several bishops at other places. One of the Lutheran churches at Riga — possibly St. James's — is to be made the Roman Cathedral Church. A number of buildings are to be placed at the disposal of the Roman Catholics for administration purposes and as dwellings. The order of the Jesuits is to receive the sanction of the government, and the Catholics have been given permission to erect schools, which are only partly amenable to the school laws of the state now in force. The Roman Church is thus the only Church officially recognized by the state, and a subsidy of four million is to be paid to this Church. The Roman Catholic clergy is to be supported by the state, while the clergy of the Lutheran and the Orthodox churches are to derive their support from their congregations and from a subsidy of one million voted to each of these churches. The entire property of the Orthodox Church — the palace of the archbishop, the cathedral, the cloisters with their domains, and the schools — has been turned over to the Roman Catholics. The Lutherans are regarded as partisans of Germany, the Orthodox people as friends of Russia. The Roman Catholics parade as representatives of the nationalistic spirit of Latvians and friends of Socialism. Outside of its successes in Germany this is probably the greatest political *coup* of Rome during the aftermath of the war. Some one sufficiently close to the scenes of action to collect the necessary data should tabulate and publish the war gains of the Roman Church. This part of the history of the World War has so far received no systematic and exhaustive treatment by expert investigators. Only stray details are being picked up here and there, which suggest the consummate skill with which the diplomats of the Vatican have worked the terrible war game in their interest. *Vis et dolus*, violence and cunning, the two instruments of the Roman church policy which John Gerhard described in his *Confessio Catholica*, are still the efficient tools of Rome. Luther called them "Gross' Macht und viel List," and beheld in them the cruel panoply of the Man of Sin. D.

Pope and Fascisti. — Recently the news service of our American press reported that an *entente cordiale* existed between those two Italian worthies, the Vicegerent of Christ and the greatest political bluffer of the day, Mussolini. The Pope looks with favor on the brutal dictator, who sneers at covenanted rights and constitutional government. Through *fascismo* influence the Pope has succeeded in

paving the way for amicable relations with the Quirinal and has dropped the tragico-comical rôle of "the prisoner of the Vatican," which used to wring groans of commiseration and abundant Peter's pence from the faithful peasants in Catholic districts. Now comes the editor of *Le Populaire,* M. Jean Longuet, who has made a special study of the *fascismo* movement, and informs us in *Foreign Affairs* (April issue): "The whole fascisti movement is appearing more and more as a purely extreme reactionary and clerical movement, while it is delivering the schools of the nation into the hands of the priests and the wage-workers into the hands of their employers. At the same time *fascism* appears to be more and more uncontrollable and unable to sustain any criticism even from the more moderate elements of the *bourgeois* liberals." But the climax of sensational reports regarding the Pope and the Fascisti was reached on April 4, when our better informed dailies, like the *Chicago Tribune,* published under display headings the ultimatum of the Vatican to the Spanish government, in the following dispatch: —

"Madrid, April 3. — Among the dozens of matters vital to national existence which are harassing Spain on the eve of the general elections are the arrival of an ultimatum from the Vatican, the danger of a revolution, and the resignation to-day of the cabinet. The question of separation of the Church from the State, which long ago has been settled by the other European nations, was brought up while the ministry of Marquis Alhucemas was preparing to reconvene the chamber. The cardinal archbishop of Saragossa issued an ultimatum which was published to-day in all the newspapers, notifying the cabinet that it must not change Article XI of the Spanish constitution, and that it must uphold this article in the forthcoming ministerial speech at the opening of the Chamber. The cardinal archbishop's ultimatum caused a tremendous sensation. Article XI of the Spanish constitution established the Roman Catholic Church as the state religion. Marquis de Alhucemas's ministry is liberal and is pledged to reform the constitution and to obtain equality for all religions in Spain. The ministry faced the necessity of obeying the Vatican by breaking its election pledge or else by incurring the enmity of the largest organized force of public opinion in Spain, which is led by the priests of the Church. The cardinal archbishop openly warned the premier that, if Article XI was not respected, all the parish priests would forbid their parishioners to vote for the government under pain of eternal damnation. Marquis de Alhucemas, fearing a crisis particularly from the Fascisti, had put off the election as long as possible. Resignation seemed to him the only way out. The only alternatives were to reconvene the old Chamber, thus facing an impassable difficulty between the Church and the reform element, or ordering an election, thereby incurring the danger of a Fascisti revolution. Dispatches received to-day from Rome carry a direct statement from the papal secretary of state that the Vatican opposes any change in the Spanish constitution. If the premier at the opening of the Chamber on April 10 were to pronounce himself in favor of

revision of Article XI, the Vatican immediately would abrogate the Concordat, creating war between the Church and State. This would amount to a diplomatic rupture, with threatened breaking off of all relations between Spain and the Vatican. Such an action would have produced tremendous difficulties for Marquis de Alhucemas. His ministry has been composed partly of reformers, who went to the election on a platform of reforming the constitution so as to make all religions equal. The Fascisti are openly preparing for a revolution in case of a general election. Three radical workmen have been shot so far at Barcelona, the chief of police declaring that the social question will not be settled until the government has become frankly communist or Fascisti."

This news interests Americans in particular. To the well-informed in the United States it is really not news, for they had known the unchanging attitude of the Roman Church to the principle of the separation of Church and State. The report from Madrid will add fuel to the fanatical flames of Ku Kluxism. But what an uncanny power is this, which under the blessed name of the Christ can strike political bargains with Socialists and Jews in Germany, with atheists in France, with communists in Latvia, etc., etc.! And how increasingly Rome-ridden is our boasted free American press becoming! Verily, the mark of the beast is coming into greater evidence from week to week. Another sign of the return of Christ.

D.

What Is Christian? — Much of the religious confusion of our time is caused by the fact that many cults claim the name Christian that scientifically are not entitled to the name. Aside from doctrinal controversy, it is a historical fact that Christianity has continued for twenty centuries and grown to its present proportions and power on the basis of a belief in the Bible as the supreme authority in religion and in the true deity of Jesus Christ. Pliny the Younger found the worship of Jesus Christ as God the distinguishing feature of Christianity and confessed that he did not see in it anything worthy of imprisonment. As far as the Scriptures are concerned, it was a belief in the resurrection of Jesus Christ and His living and personal interest in them that revived the hopes of His disciples that had been blasted by the crucifixion, and furnished the ground for the continuation of their belief in Him and of their efforts to spread His teachings. From a purely historical and scientific point of view there is not the slightest evidence that, without a belief in the continued life and presence of Jesus Christ with His disciples, Christianity would have lasted a century after the crucifixion. Christ would have been numbered among the false teachers of religion whose very names are forgotten. It seems clear, therefore, that those who deny the resurrection of Jesus Christ and His continued presence with His people, and who refuse to worship Him, have no claim, either historically or scientifically, to the name Christian.

Watchman-Examiner, March 1, 1923.

The Growth of the City. — A comparison of census reports of 1910 and 1920 shows a remarkable increase in the population of our cities. In 1910 there were 91,972,266 people living the United States, of whom 42,166,120 lived in the cities. In 1920 there were 105,710,620 people in the United States of whom 54,304,603 lived in the cities. The total population thus increased fifteen per cent., while the city population increased twenty-nine per cent. — *Watchman-Examiner.*

Bible-Passages in Newspapers.—The fad of inducing newspapers to publish passages from the Bible in their editions is directed by the Back to the Bible Society, which has its headquarters in Cincinnati. Its bureau served 871 papers in 1922, and is serving 2,038 papers in 1923; of these, 1,946 are published in the United States, 87 in the Dominion of Canada, 2 in Newfoundland, 2 in the West Indies, and 1 in Korea. These papers have a combined circulation of 14,233,254, and it is estimated that each copy is, on the average, read by two persons. There is a mission in this odd enterprise, especially if the Gospel-texts of Scripture are published. To many a person this may be the only time that he looks at a Bible-text. True, these texts appear in a strange setting in a secular newspaper with its daily accounts of human wickedness. But just such a strange setting exists for a Christian noonday service in a theater, for a mission in the slums of a great city, for a religious gathering among the frivolous crowd on an ocean liner on Sunday, etc. Phil. 1, 18. D.

The Einstein Theory. — The photographic experiments made by the Lick Observatory expedition on the island of Tahiti and in Australia during the solar eclipse last year are said to have so satisfactorily proved Dr. Albert Einstein's theory of relativity that Dr. W. W. Campbell, the director of the observatory, has decided to make no further experiments. Photographs made of 62 to 84 stars in the neighborhood of the sun three months before the eclipse, at night, and during the eclipse showed an average deflection of 1.75 seconds, supposed to be due to the action of the sun upon these stars. This is taken to prove that the claim of Dr. Einstein is established, *viz.*, that time and space are not terms carrying with them an absolute and fixed meaning, but state only what is true concerning an object in relation to some other object. To the popular mind the theory has not become more intelligible through these experiments. Dr. Campbell admits that "to the man in the streets his confirmation of the theory will not make an appreciable difference. But in astronomy and in physics its importance is expected eventually to be noticeable." Prof. T. J. J. Lee, Government astronomer on Mare Island, has stated that he does not believe the Einstein theory capable of proof. D.

Rev. Dr. Cornelius Woelfkin, of the wealthy Park Avenue Baptist Church, of which Mr. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., is a member and a trustee, signalized his departure from the old creedal position of his church in a sermon on April 29. According to the report in the *New York Tribune* for April 30 he said: " 'I want to present to you a statement of the faith that is in me to-day. This is a time of great

religious unrest. The Church must move with the times. It is a living organism, and it must break traditional ties that bind and hamper it. Our practise of excluding members of other denominations unless they are baptized again in our rite is out of harmony with the spirit of unity that is growing in the churches. We already have opened our Communion table to other Christians, and this proposed step follows that logically. Do you suppose that in heaven, when Communion is celebrated, John Calvin, John Knox, Charles Wesley, and other great leaders of the non-Baptist world will be denied the privilege of sitting with the Baptists?' he asked, to the obvious amusement of his audience. 'We need a great tolerance for the various sects, isms, and fads that are springing up about the fringes of the older churches. I do not regard them as heretical. They are the result of a spiritual urge on the part of people who are seeking what they think the Church cannot furnish them. Sir Oliver Lodge is one of the outstanding physicists of his generation, and he is trying sincerely and earnestly to lift the veil. So also is Conan Doyle, an eminent and high-minded man. The healing movements, Christians Science and the others, are practising a lost function of the Church which the Church should regain. . . . I am a Modernist, out and out,' he began, 'as opposed to the Fundamentalists and Traditionalists. I am also a democrat in religion. I am in step with Dr. Fosdick and believe in accepting the scientific attitude of mind and scientific truths. The world is in a critical condition and needs the Church as never before; but the Church must make itself capable of meeting the needs of the world.'" The reporter added: "The Rev. Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick is special preacher at the Old First Presbyterian Church, although a Baptist, and is under fire from conservative Presbyterians for his liberal utterances. Dr. Woelfkin explained that, while his statements would perhaps be criticized by denominational leaders in this country, they were those of the great majority in the English Baptist Church. At least 90 per cent. of the Baptist congregations in that country receive members who have been baptized by another mode than immersion, and have abandoned the closed Communion table. Nearly all of the other so-called Evangelical churches in the United States, including the Methodists, Presbyterians, and Congregationalists, recognize the baptism of other Christian bodies as valid when receiving members." Dr. Woelfkin also registered his dissent from those who oppose the modern theater. The reporter says: "His attitude toward the playhouse was in marked contrast to that of the Rev. Dr. John Roach Straton, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church, who led his members two weeks ago in a revival service in a pledge not to attend the theater, play cards, or dance. After the service Dr. Woelfkin explained his stand on the theater more in detail. He said that, while he attended plays occasionally, he was not a 'regular theatergoer.' 'It is a permanent institution with great possibilities in the way of inspiration, education, and entertainment, and it is foolish to condemn it whole-

sale. There are evils in it, and these should be attacked, but the good should be commended also. When I was a boy, our Church was so strict that we were permitted to visit only the menagerie at the circus. If we had strayed through the entrance and watched a slack-wire walker, we could have been put out of the Church for it. I have a cousin in Philadelphia who is one of the most splendid philanthropists I know of. She was barred from the church in her youth because she attended the theater, and she has never since joined. The Church sustained a loss in its action then.'" — The Baptist mode of baptism by immersion should never have been made a church-dividing issue. So far as the removal of this schismatic practise is concerned, one might rejoice in the action of Dr. Woelfkin, and all those whom he names as partners in his movement. But his action is permeated with the spirit of modernism, and in getting away from a mere church rite, he is getting away from more serious matters, and his whole attitude, both in doctrine and ethics, tends towards laxity. That is the signature of most men of his stamp in our day. D.

Bolshevism and Christianity. — On this subject the *Catholic World* (May, 1923) writes: "Those who still cherish the illusion that the Bolsheviki, while themselves irreligious, are willing that the people should be free to practise religion as they please, should read the following articles from the Constitution of the Soviets: "'9°. The school is separated from the church. Article 30. It is forbidden, in churches and in private homes, to teach religion to children under eighteen years of age. The right to teach religion in the churches to those who have reached that age will be granted by the local executive committee, if the mass of the population really feel the need of it. Article 50. In consequence of the separation of the church from the school the teaching of any religion whatsoever cannot in any sense be authorized in either public or private establishments. Exception is made for special schools of theology.' The extreme radical, socialistic view is manifest in these enactments. Parents have no right to say how their children shall be brought up. The state owns the child and consequently dictates what shall be done with the child. The views of parents are not to be considered. Furthermore, there remains no private life. Legislation extends to the most intimate activities of the home. A mother teaching her child to pray at its own bedside is a criminal. Even Sparta never dared to carry state socialism as far as that. Yet there are still those — chief among them the prince of modern prophets, H. G. Wells — who say that Russia is the hope of mankind, and that Lenine and Trotzky are the saviors of the world." MUELLER.

BOOK REVIEW.

Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.: —

Concordia Home and Teachers' Bible. Self-pronouncing. With special helps, revised and, in part, rewritten by *Prof. Th. Graebner.* Style G. C., silk cloth, red edges, $2.50. Style G. F., leather-grained cloth, gilt edges, $3.00. Style G. D. C., full divinity circuit, leather, gilt edges, $4.75.

This is the Bible which the publishing house of the Missouri Synod has prepared to supply a long-felt need in our Church. While there is no lack of popular and useful Bible editions with explanatory, historical, and geographical notes, they usually contain statements which the Lutheran Church cannot accept as correct, and which contain, or at least wink at, false conclusions, and in some instances set aside the inspiration of the Bible. This evil has been remedied, and under an arrangement with one of the large Bible manufacturers, Concordia Publishing House now offers a Bible which may be safely placed into the hands of our general Lutheran public. The text is the Authorized (King James) Version, in fair-sized, self-pronouncing type, with marginal references. The helps comprise a concise Bible dictionary, a combination Concordance, a subject-index, and twelve standard Biblical maps. These helps have been carefully revised and, in large part, entirely rewritten by Prof. Theo. Graebner of Concordia Seminary. Considering the work spent on this Bible and the comparatively limited market for it, the price at which it is sold is very reasonable. MUELLER.

Synodical Reports of Missouri Synod. *Western District.* 32 pages; 18 cts. — *Manitoba and Saskatchewan District.* 16 pages; 9 cts. — *Eastern District.* 52 pages; 23 cts. — *California and Nevada District.* 48 pages; 21 cts.

The Proceedings of the Western District contain a doctrinal paper: "The History of the Western District, resp, of Synod, has in a Glorious Way Shown that God's Blessing is with Those who in Doctrine and Practise Remain True to His Word," by Pastor F. Wenger, also a summary of an essay by Dr. Kretzmann on "The Baptism, or Gift, of the Holy Ghost"; those of the Eastern District, a doctrinal paper on "The Family Altar" (continued), by Pastor J. Sohn; those of the California and Nevada District, an essay on "Christ's Return and the Doctrine of the Millennium," by Prof. Th. Graebner. FRITZ.

United Lutheran Publication House, Philadelphia: —

1. **Six Years in Hammock Land.** *Rev. Ralph J. White.* 123 pages; 28 pages of illustrations.

The Merger Synod's missions in British Guiana — one hundred and seventy-eight years old — are here described in an admirable manner. The present missionary, with whose advent a new period of prosperity has begun for the missions, is a good narrator. He offers no dry chronology of the events that have marked the checkered history of the mission, no abstruse dissertation on primitive religion and anthropology, but tells in a plain, straightforward manner what has happened to the missions, what

he has seen, heard, observed, the bright and the dark sides of the missionary's life, his fears and his hopes. You see while he is pleasantly chatting what the missions were, what they are now, and what he hopes, with the Lord's help, to make them. The little book is a model of a mission-tale for our church-people. D.

2. I Believe. *William Lee Hunton.* 82 pages.

By means of the 31 meditations on the Apostles' Creed, of two to three small pages each, requiring about two minutes' reading, the contents of the Creed can be reviewed, and catechumens can revive the instruction which they received during catechization. The plan is a good one. The author's style is plain. In a few places a little more precision and doctrinal distinctness is desirable. *E. g.*, on p. 17 it is implied that faith is "giving the heart to God. The mind will follow later." This is obscure. On p. 48 the descent into hell is said to have been for the purpose to "proclaim even there the 'good tidings of great joy'"; and on the next page the remark of Augustine is cited that Christ went "to that place where those who died before the coming of Christ expected Him." Neither 1 Pet. 3 nor Article IX of the Formula of Concord contains such teaching. On pp. 65 and 66 the holiness of the Christian Church should not be explained wholly by the holy lives of its members. That is only one side of it. The work of the Holy Ghost is chiefly the imparting of the righteousness of Christ and as a fruit of that the creation of a righteousness of life. That is the logical sequence of the Third Article after the Second, and the reason why "the forgiveness of sins is mentioned immediately after the Church as the first great gift bestowed by the Holy Ghost." In the meditation on the forgiveness of sins (p. 72 f.), which is very brief, a few sentences might be added on the force of the term "forgiveness." D.

Lutheran Book Concern, Columbus, O.: —

Pen Pictures of Prophets. *Gerhard E. Lenski.* $1.25.

This is a series of addresses based on the lives and teachings of the prophets Hosea, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel. Originally these addresses were delivered in lecture form before the Lutheran Chautauqua convened at Lakeside, O., July 9—16, 1922. We recommend the book to our pastors principally because of the suggestions it contains for applying the lessons of the Old Testament to present-day conditions. In many Lutheran circles the Old Testament is altogether too much neglected, and Lutheran congregations are kept in ignorance concerning those vital messages which were addressed to people very similar to our own and living in times very much like those of the present. How these messages may be utilized with benefit is shown in this book. Some of the statements made in the book may be questioned. Occasionally the application is strained, and there is no reason why the name of the Prophet Hosea should be misspelled. MUELLER.

Pulpit and Battlefield. *Arthur H. Kuhlman.* Price, 40 cts.; in dozen lots, 32 cts. per copy; in hundred lots, 29 cts.

This story centers in the life of Peter Muhlenberg, that eminent patriot, who established for himself a place in the history of our country

through his loyalty during the Revolutionary War. The story has many faults. Frequently there is a lack of logical sequence, the action is abrupt, the delineation of character hazy, and the chapters are crowded with too many incidents and improbable scenes. Again, though no one cares to derogate from Muhlenberg's glory, yet the story does not present the real heroes of the Lutheran faith in America, who, obscure and unnoticed, struggled faithfully for the maintenance of confessional Lutheranism. Those men have contributed to the glory of the Lutheran Church in America who, midst trials and temptations, fought bravely and persistently for the truth of God's Word as expressed in the Confessions of the Lutheran Church, and for a practise in conformity with these Confessions. The story of these pastors and congregations has never been written. Here is a field which deserves the attention of able writers.

MUELLER.

The Evil of Lodgery. *Roy D. Linhart,* Pastor of Faith Lutheran Church, Detroit, Mich. Price, 15 cts.; dozen, $1.50; hundred, $10.00.

This is a serviceable and popular demonstration of the evil of lodgery, directed mainly against Freemasonry. The arguments are stated with precision and force. The book, however, does not clearly show that all lodges fall under the same condemnation as Freemasonry. This is a point which must not be overlooked by pastors and writers dealing with the subject of lodgery. MUELLER.

The Lie of the Age. *W. Schoeler.* Price, 75 cts.; in dozen lots, @ 60 cts.; in hundred lots, @ 55 cts.

This is a fine story and eminently timely. Written by a Lutheran, it is free from the nauseous things that characterize the average modern story. The theme is lofty, and the purpose of the story is to point out the dangers that threaten the students at colleges and universities in which evolution is taught. As this great "lie of the age" is taught in all our State schools, the book supplies a real demand. Incidentally, also, it speaks words of encouragement for the maintenance of Christian schools and colleges. We cheerfully recommend this story. MUELLER.

The Lutheran Literary Board, Burlington, Iowa: —

A System of Christian Evidence. *Leander S. Keyser, D. D.,* Professor of Ethics, Theism, and Christian Evidence in Wittenberg College, Springfield, O. Price, net, $1.75.

This is a second and greatly enlarged edition of the writer's original work on Christian Evidence, or Apologetics, which was received so favorably. By the addition of much valuable material the work has been greatly improved and well deserves a place in the minister's library. The author is an able apologist and thoroughly covers the entire ground of Christian Apologetics. The paragraphs are clearly and logically arranged, the style is simple, lucid, and popular, and the whole book is interestingly written. The objections of skeptics, infidels, freethinkers, rationalists, and latitudinarians are ably confuted, and the ethical, moral, and spiritual value of the Christian religion is clearly set forth. The chapters on the internal proofs of the divine inspiration of the Bible, on Biblical criticism, and on evolution are of special importance. Of course, the reviewer can-

not give assent to every statement in the book. In general, the value of Apologetics seems overestimated, while occasionally the reader would expect a more decisive position. In spite of these *naevi* the book deserves a thorough study, especially at the present time, when so many objections are raised against the Christian religion. MUELLER.

The Macmillan Company, New York, N. Y.: —

Christianity and Liberalism. *J. Gresham Machen, D. D.*, assistant professor of New Testament Literature and Exegesis in Princeton Theological Seminary. $1.75.

Now and then at least the heart of the reviewer is gladdened by the sight of a good book which is really worth while studying. Dr. Machen's *Christianity and Liberalism* is a book of this kind. In a clear and systematic way he takes up the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith, compares them with the falsehoods of modern liberalism, defends the faith, and confutes error. The subjects treated are the following: Introduction; God and Man; The Bible; Christ; Salvation; The Church. Of course, in the treatment of these doctrines the author exhibits his Calvinistic views, and consequently one must read the book with caution. Nevertheless, the book contains so many beautiful and instructive passages and so much valuable and timely information on the destructive tendencies of modern liberalism that we would recommend it to our brethren in the ministry for careful perusal. MUELLER.

The Sunday-School Times Company, Philadelphia, Pa.: —

Is the Higher Criticism Scholarly? *Robert Dick Wilson, Ph. D., D. D.*, Professor of Semitic Philology in Princeton Theological Seminary.

The purpose of this brochure is to show that the destructive "assured results of modern scholarship" are indefensible. In order to accomplish his purpose, the author produces striking facts and evidences. The believing scholar is in full sympathy with the views and arguments set forth in this book and will find it a pleasure and benefit to consider them carefully. The author's view on Higher Criticism is summarized on page 57, where he says: "The Higher Criticism, as Dr. Driver affirms in the preface to his *Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament*, is based upon 'a comparative study of the writings.' No one will object to this method of investigation. Only let us *abide by the results.* Let us not bring in our subjective views and make them outweigh the obvious facts." He goes on to say: "Last of all, we must cast a glance at the history of the religion of Israel. It must be admitted that, before we can attempt such a history, we must determine two great facts: first, the dates of the documents on which the history is based, and secondly, the attitude we are going to take with regard to miracle and prophecy. As to the first of these facts, I have already given a number of the reasons for holding that there is no sufficient ground for believing that the Pentateuch did not originate with Moses, or that David did not write many of the psalms, and that there is every reason in language and history for supposing that all but a few of the books were written before 500 B. C. I have not attempted to fix the exact dates of composition or final redaction of the books composed before that time, preferring rather to show that there is

nothing in the history of the world from 2000 to 164 B. C. that militates against the possibility, nor even against the probability, of the trustworthiness of the history of Israel as recorded in the Old Testament. Nor, in spite of some apparent inconsistencies and of many passages difficult to explain satisfactorily, owing to our ignorance of all the facts, is there anything in the history of Israel as recorded in the Old Testament that makes it appear incredible or unveracious. No one knows enough to affirm with confidence that any one of the prophetic books was not written by the man whose name it bears. No one knows enough to assert that the kings and others mentioned did not do and say what is ascribed to them."

A very interesting and useful foreword, written by Philip E. Howard, publisher of the *Sunday-School Times*, affords the reader an insight into Professor Wilson's inner motives for opposing Higher Criticism. We read: "What Robert Dick Wilson then believed, and now believes, with all his heart is this: that textual and historical Biblical controversies should be taken out of the region of subjective personal opinion into the region of objective, clearly attested fact. It was to this task that he set himself, and no labor was to be too long or too tedious or too exacting to enable him to reach that goal. He could not at that time learn Babylonian in America, so he went to Heidelberg, determined to learn every language that would enable him the better to understand the Scriptures, and to make his investigations in original documents. So to Babylonian he added Ethiopic, Phenician, all the Aramaic dialects, and Egyptian, Coptic, Persian, and Armenian. He studied in Berlin with Schrader, who was Delitzsch's teacher, called the father of Assyriology. He studied his Arabic and Syriac under Sachau and Arabic under Jahn and Dieterichi; Hebrew under Dillmann and Strack and Egyptian under Brugsch. He became conversant with some twenty-six languages in these years devoted to language acquisition. For Professor Wilson had a plan, carefully worked out during his student days in Germany, under which he proposed to spend fifteen years in language study, fifteen years in Biblical textual study in the light of the findings of his studies in philology, and then, God willing, fifteen years of writing out his findings, so that others might share them with him. And now it is our privilege in this booklet to read, in terms that we all can understand, some of the gloriously reassuring facts that he has found in his long pilgrimage through ancient days."

MUELLER.

Fleming H. Revell Co., New York, N. Y.: —

Within the Gateways of the Far East. *Charles R. Erdman*, Professor of Practical Theology, Princeton Theological Seminary.

This is a delightful record of Professor Erdman's recent travels in Japan, Korea, and China. The author writes in a happy vein, and his remarks on the ethical, social, moral, and religious conditions of the countries visited are worthy of consideration. Speaking of the missionaries in the Far East, he might have found occasion to censure certain liberalistic tendencies which seem to prevail among them and the substitution of civilization for the preaching of the Gospel. He mentions this subject on page 126, where he writes: "After some months of continued association with missionaries, one could not fail to return from

the field with the belief that the time has come for more definite and aggressive and personal evangelistic effort. Particularly was this evident in China and Japan. Other forms of service are admirable and essential, whether medical, or industrial, or educational, or social; and all of these may be used toward the one supreme end of bringing individual souls into vital relationship to Christ; but there is sometimes a danger of mistaking the means for the end. The reports at the Shanghai National Conference laid great stress upon this point; and the Conference of Federated Missions, at Karuizawa, took 'Evangelism' as its theme and made ringing declarations along this line. The feeling seemed to be unanimous that the definite presentation of the Gospel-message to individuals must be made and kept more preeminent in all the forms of missionary activity which are being prosecuted so admirably and with such notable success." The author closes the book with the following paragraph: "Finally, the supreme conviction which one brings back from the Orient is that of the unity of the human race and the sufficiency of the Gospel of Christ. The differences between the peoples of China and Korea and Japan and America are obvious and interesting, but their similarities and their essential oneness are far more real and important. All have the same sorrows and joys, and hopes and fears, and temptations and sins, and glorious possibilities and spiritual needs; and, for all, there is hope and relief and light and triumph and liberty and peace in the presence and the transforming power of the living Christ. For making Him known, the Orient has never offered more abundant opportunities, nor have the obstacles ever been more obvious or more real; and these obstacles and opportunities constitute the most significant walls and gateways of the Far East."

MUELLER.

Geo. H. Doran Co., New York, N. Y.: —

The Return of Christ. *Charles R. Erdman,* Professor of Practical Theology, Princeton Theological Seminary, Princeton, N. J. $1.00.

This book is rather below the standard of the Erdman books. It lacks the clear and dsitinct tone that characterizes the other volumes of the esteemed author. Especially in a treatise on *The Return of Christ* the reader looks for definite views. No matter whether a writer be premillennialist or postmillennialist, or non-millennialist, his book should ring with personal conviction. In this the present volume is wanting. Professor Erdman is manifestly a premillennialist, and his arguments favor premillennialism. Nevertheless, he does not regard the matter as of great importance. To the Lutheran reviewer this position is untenable. The subject of millennialism, or rather the refutation of millennialism, is of weighty significance. Millennialism has no place in Scripture. It is merely a whimsical fancy. Christ's kingdom is spiritual, and the subjects of Christ's spiritual kingdom will behold the revelation of Christ's glory not on earth, but in heaven, after the Judgment. No one can be a millennialist without perverting the doctrine of the Church and without holding hopes not substantiated in Scripture. Again, no one can be a millennialist unless he sets aside and misinterprets clear Scripture-passages which have once for all settled the question of Christ's return and which find expression in the confession of the creed: "From thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead."

MUELLER.

Praise Ye the Lord, All Ye Lands! Published by *Wm. E. Krueger*, 818 E. Main St., Belleville, Ill. Order direct from publisher. 10 cts.; dozen, 90 cts.

This is a song of praise based on the 100th Psalm, written for mixed chorus and interspersed with a few short duets and a short bass solo. It may be used for festival or for ordinary occasions. Mr. Krueger is a teacher in one of our parochial schools. The composition can be sung by a choir of average ability. FRITZ.

Stefan Zweig's **Jeremiah** has been brought out in an English translation by Thomas Selzer of New York. The translation is made from the author's revised German text by *Eden* and *Cedar Paul*. The Biblical material relating to the great witness of the Babylonian captivity and the destruction of Jerusalem, chiefly the prophet's own book, has been dramatized. The drama presents nine scenes, beginning with the inspiration of the prophet for his mission and ending with the abduction of the people. Between these terminal points the uprising of the nationalistic spirit of the Jews, fanned into fierce outburst by the military party under General Abimelech, and the theocratic party under the high priest Pashur and the people's prophet Hananiah, the fatal meetings of the council at Zedekiah's palace, the equivocal, then desperate attitude of the king, the deliberations with the envoys of Nebuchadnezzar, the hopeless efforts of Jeremiah to stay the approaching ruin of the nation by pacifist measures, the conversion of his assailant Baruch — all these and a score of other exciting scenes are depicted in accordance with the rules of the histrionic art. No matter if the motives guiding the diplomacy of the Chaldeans, on the one hand, and the nationalism of the Hebrews, on the other, are in the main correctly explained, the Bible-story of Jeremiah and his times gains nothing by this dramatic portrayal. On the contrary, sacred Bible facts suffer by being weakened or perverted for dramatic effect. Take, for instance, the lurid scene which exhibits the prophet in an ecstatic state as he receives the divine summons for his mission. Jeremiah in this scene is a half-maniac, and the act of inspiration is after the fashion of manticism, so much favored by certain modern theologians. For some of the scenes in this drama the modern historical school of theology might have written the *scenario*. If this play were put on the stage or filmed, the audience would view it as any other play; it would afford the jaded theatergoer that brief diversion which he is craving, and it is very doubtful whether the intended lesson of the drama, as Romain Rolland has interpreted it, would be realized: "the sublime melancholy that sees beyond the bloody drama of to-day the eternal tragedy of humanity — the defeats that are more fertile than victories and the sorrows that are more resplendent than joys." The lesson of Jeremiah is more spiritual and elevated, and it is told with matchless grandeur and sublimity in heart-gripping simplicity by Jeremiah himself in his prophecies and lamentations. Human art cannot add anything to the beauty of the Scripture account, but it can mar its effect. D.